

U.S.S.N. 10,693,989

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Claim Amendments

Please amend claims 1, 7, and 14 as follows:

Please cancel claims 2, 8, and 15 as follows:

U.S.S.N. 10,693,989

Claims as Amended

What is claimed is:

1. (currently amended) A phase shift photomask comprising:
 - a transparent substrate;
 - a patterned opaque material layer formed upon the transparent substrate to define a non-transmissive region of the transparent substrate aligned beneath the patterned opaque material layer and an adjoining transmissive region of the transparent substrate not aligned beneath the patterned opaque material layer, wherein the transmissive region has formed therein a pit having a stepped sidewall wherein the stepped sidewall comprises a minimum of one arc shaped step.
2. cancelled
3. (original) The phase shift photomask of claim 1 wherein the pit has one stepped sidewall and one non-stepped sidewall.
4. (original) The phase shift photomask of claim 1 wherein the stepped sidewall comprises from about three to about ten steps.
5. (original) The phase shift photomask of claim 1 wherein an overall depth of the pit having the stepped sidewall provides for a 180 degree phase change of photoexposure radiation.

U.S.S.N. 10,693,989

6. (original) The phase shift photomask of claim 1 further comprising a second transmissive region on an opposite side of the non-transmissive region from the transmissive region, where the second transmissive region does not have formed therein a pit.

7. (currently amended) A method for fabricating a phase shift photomask comprising:

providing a transparent substrate;

forming upon the transparent substrate a patterned opaque material layer;

sequentially and repetitively:

isotropically etching the transparent substrate at a location not covered by the patterned opaque material layer; and

laterally etching the patterned opaque material layer, to form a non-transmissive region of the transparent substrate beneath a multiply laterally etched patterned opaque material layer and an adjoining transmissive region of the transparent substrate not beneath the multiply laterally etched patterned opaque material layer, where the transmissive region of the transparent substrate has formed therein a pit having a stepped sidewall wherein the stepped sidewall comprises a minimum of one arc shaped step.

8. cancelled

U.S.S.N. 10,693,989

9. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the pit has one stepped sidewall and one non-stepped sidewall.

10. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the stepped sidewall comprises from about three to about ten steps.

11. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein an overall depth of the pit having the stepped sidewall provides for a 180 degree phase change of photoexposure radiation.

12. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the transparent substrate further comprises a second transmissive region on an opposite side of the non-transmissive region from the transmissive region, where the second transmissive region does not have formed therein a pit.

13. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the sequential and repetitive isotropic etching of the transparent substrate and lateral etching of the patterned opaque material layer is undertaken in a self aligned fashion.

14. (currently amended) A method for fabricating a phase shift photomask comprising:

providing a transparent substrate;

forming upon the transparent substrate a laterally progressing series of patterned opaque material layers;

U.S.S.N. 10,693,989

sequentially and repetitively:

isotropically etching the transparent substrate at a location not covered by the laterally progressing series of patterned opaque material layers; and

laterally progressively stripping the laterally progressing series of patterned opaque material layers, to form a non-transmissive region of the transparent substrate beneath a remaining non-stripped patterned opaque material layer and an adjoining transmissive region of the transparent substrate not beneath the remaining non-stripped patterned opaque material layer, where the transmissive region of the transparent substrate has formed therein a pit having a stepped sidewall wherein the stepped sidewall comprises a minimum of one arc shaped step.

15. cancelled

16. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein the pit has one stepped sidewall and one non-stepped sidewall.

17. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein the stepped sidewall comprises from about three to about ten steps.

18. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein an overall depth of the pit having the stepped sidewall provides for a 180 degree phase change of photoexposure radiation.

19. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein the transparent substrate further comprises a second transmissive region on an

U.S.S.N. 10,693,989

opposite side of the non-transmissive region from the transmissive region, where the second transmissive region does not have formed therein a pit.

20. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein the laterally progressing series of patterned opaque material layers is formed employing a single lithographic process step.

**This Page is Inserted by IFW Indexing and Scanning
Operations and is not part of the Official Record**

BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images include but are not limited to the items checked:

- BLACK BORDERS**
- IMAGE CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES**
- FADED TEXT OR DRAWING**
- BLURRED OR ILLEGIBLE TEXT OR DRAWING**
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES**
- COLOR OR BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS**
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS**
- LINES OR MARKS ON ORIGINAL DOCUMENT**
- REFERENCE(S) OR EXHIBIT(S) SUBMITTED ARE POOR QUALITY**
- OTHER:** _____

IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.

As rescanning these documents will not correct the image problems checked, please do not report these problems to the IFW Image Problem Mailbox.